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- Activities for families and children

## Activities for families and children

**Last updated:** 16/1-2023

About Sweden – an orientation about Swedish society.

Print

This text is about families and children's activities.

It describes the opportunities that children and young people have to fill their leisure time with culture, sports and different types of associations. You will be asked to think about what kind of association you would like to join.

The text also describes open preschool and other activities for parents on parental leave.

The right to culture and to active leisure

Everyone is entitled to enjoy art, music, theatre, dance, film, literature and science. You are also entitled to cultural pursuits of your own and to making art. Women and men have the same rights to decide for themselves what parts of cultural life they want to take part in.

Children are entitled to active leisure and recreation, with play and leisure activities appropriate for their age. Children are also entitled to enjoy culture, to cultural pursuits of their own and to make art.

People with functional impairments have to be able to partake in cultural life and pursue cultural activities of their own on the same conditions as everyone else. Sweden is a signatory of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## Activities during parental leave

There are various activities you can do during your parental leave if you would like to meet other people on parental leave.

Open preschool is a place to meet and socialise with other adults, while the children get an opportunity to play with other children. Everyone is welcome, you don't need to register beforehand, and there is no charge. In some places there are open preschools that are intended particularly for recently arrived parents, and these preschools also offer opportunities for support in learning Swedish. Open preschools may be run by the municipality, but also by churches or associations.

Other activities include baby get-togethers in libraries, parent cafés, child rhythmic, and baby swimming.

Some shopping centres and bigger department stores have family and breastfeeding rooms. These rooms provide a quiet setting in which to sit down to breastfeed, change nappies and heat food for your child.

### **Swedish with a baby**

Through Swedish with a baby you can meet other parents and practice your Swedish

[Read more about Svenska med baby on their website.](#)

Questions to think about

Why do you think it is a good idea that there are activities for people on parental leave?

### **Children and young people's leisure time**

Children have a right to play, rest and leisure time. A meaningful leisure time can be a support in the child's development. Most children like to be with their friends during leisure time. It is common to use the internet, watch TV and listen to music. Many engage in more organised activities.

#### **■■Sports**

Most children in Sweden are engaged in a sports club at some time during their growing up. Approximately as many girls as boys are active. Sports clubs are common at all ages but the largest share of children who engage in sports is to be found among those aged 10-12. Common sports are football, riding, indoor bandy, tennis, swimming, ice hockey, gymnastics, handball, basketball and track and field.

Swedish sport is a democratic national activity. It is based upon membership in a club in which the members pay a membership fee. Many coaches in Swedish sport are parents of children in the club. Most of the coaches work without pay. Parents are often expected to help with activities in connection with their children's engaging in sports.

Some municipalities have a Fritidsbank, or equipment bank, where children can borrow sports and recreational equipment free of charge.

[Read more about Fritidsbank and find your nearest equipment bank on the Fritidsbanken website.](#)

#### **■■Culture**

##### **The culture school**

The culture school gives children and young people opportunities to engage in artistic and cultural activities after school.

At Kulturskolan children can learn to play a musical instrument, to dance or do drama, for example, or to pursue various art forms after school.

##### **Libraries**

Libraries are available to all. For children and young people the libraries often have other activities, games and entertainment. It is often possible to borrow computers with internet connections as well as to borrow films, games and audio books.

Daily reading affects the child's verbal capacity, school maturity, and school results. Story hours increase the child's vocabulary, reading comprehension, and capacity to express itself.

#### **■■Internet**

It is common that children start to use the internet at an early age.

Small children often look at short films. When the children are older, up to 10 years of age, game playing increases. Thereafter the interest in social media increases.

##### **Recreation centres**

At the recreation centres there are activities with employed leisure time counselors. The children can meet there outside of school hours. Activities, competitions, theme evenings and group projects are developed and planned in accordance with the young people's own desires and needs.

#### **■■Club life**

There is a strong club life in Sweden, with clubs for both children and adults.

There are many associations and clubs in Sweden, for all kinds of interests. Sports clubs, film clubs, theatre groups, gaming associations, scout groups, ethnic associations, clubs for outdoor recreation, photography clubs and much more. By joining an association you get to do something that you enjoy. You also get to

know others who have the same interest.

Questions to think about

How can you help your children find activities they are interested in?

What associations are there in your municipality?

Would you like to join an association? If so, which one?

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